



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia & Kings Canyon
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Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks Fire Update

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Parks Announce Fire Projects for 2006

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks plan to complete ten fuel reduction projects this summer and fall totaling 3,048 acres. Using both prescribed fire and mechanical techniques, the parks aim to restore ecosystems and provide community protection by reducing the accumulation of woody debris that can fuel a destructive fire.

Four prescribed fires are planned in Kings Canyon National Park (three in the Grant Grove area and one in Cedar Grove). Five additional prescribed fires are planned in Sequoia National Park (one in Ash Mountain, one in Giant Forest, one near Dorst Campground, and two in the East Fork Kaweah River drainage). Complementing work from previous years, another phase of mechanical thinning will remove excess vegetation around Wuksachi Lodge, providing protection from wildfire.

Ignition dates for prescribed fires are scheduled through continual monitoring of weather, fuel moisture, availability of firefighting resources, and consultation with local meteorologists from the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District. The field season usually ends with the first significant rain or snow event, likely in October or November.

Predictions for Fire Season

National fire forecasters predict that the majority of California will experience an average fire season. Above-average precipitation this spring may slightly delay fire season in the mountains. Fire potential in the foothills may increase as the summer progresses due to the vigorous growth of grass and brush. The May 1st snow surveys showed that the water content of the snow pack is now 188% of average in the Kings drainage, 130% of average for the Kaweah drainage, and 174% of average for the Kern drainage.

Recent Fire Activity

Last week, seasonal fire crews suppressed two small fires during their first week of work. Both fires were started by lightning, contained the day of detection, and together totaled less than half an acre. Last month four other lightning-caused fires were discovered in the East Fork Kaweah River drainage. All of the fires were surrounded by snow, managed as wildland fire use projects, and have shown no recent activity.

For more details on the planned projects and for general information about the parks' fire program, visit www.nps.gov/seki/fire/fireinfo/current.htm.

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